

Washington, DC – Today, Congressman Harry Teague called on officials at Ft. Bliss and William Beaumont Army Medical Center (WBAMC) to respond to recent allegations and provide more information on how soldiers suffering from Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI) receive care. In a letter to WBAMC Commander Colonel James Baunchalk, Teague – joined by fellow Congressional Invisible Wounds Caucus members Rep. Ciro Rodriguez and Rep. Silvestre Reyes – demands answers to questions regarding the current measures in place to treat TBI. The letter follows [reports](#) that soldiers returning from war with TBI have struggled with months long waits to be seen by a doctor, inadequate care, and major delays in the opening of Ft. Bliss' TBI Clinic.

“We are particularly concerned with reports that service men and women who survived combat must now battle government bureaucracy to receive care for their wounds when they return home. The empty Fort Bliss building meant to serve as a treatment center for TBI patients is a powerful symbol of the neglect that our wounded veterans and service members face,” Harry Teague writes in the letter. “As representatives of the Southern New Mexico-West Texas-Fort Bliss region, we are deeply concerned that our government could be failing those to whom we owe the most. These reports must be investigated and receive the full attention of the United States Congress and government.”

To read the full text of the letter, please [click here](#) .

A Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is the disruption in brain function caused by a head injury. Reports have estimated that 20 percent of men and women serving in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) experience TBI. Lasting symptoms include cognitive disability, memory loss, headaches, fatigue, sleeplessness, dizziness, emotional disturbance, difficulty with concentration, slurred speech, and impairment of executive

function, among others. TBI ultimately can damage personal relationships, limit professional advancement and economic opportunity, and lead to substance abuse and even suicide

Congressman Teague has made veterans' issues a top priority, helping to secure advanced appropriations funding for the VA and introducing legislation aimed at addressing and reducing the impact of mental health issues like PTSD have on the lives of returning veterans. He led a bi-partisan group in forming the Congressional Invisible Wounds Caucus, to promote awareness of and solutions for the mental health challenges facing our service members and veterans. He was recognized by the Coalition for Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans for his leadership on the mental health of our veterans and service members. Teague also recently hosted a field hearing of the House Veterans Affairs Committee (HVAC) Health Subcommittee in Las Cruces, New Mexico to address the unique issues facing southern New Mexico's veterans.

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